

April 15, 2020

St. Louis County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Update

Death During a Time of a Global Pandemic

There are approximately 28 lives that end each day in St. Louis County. According to the St. Louis County Medical Examiner's Office, there were 9,916 deaths reported to them in 2019 and 10,253 deaths in 2018. The overwhelming majority of these deaths are attributable to natural causes or medical events. Others are lost to violence, suicide, or overdose.

The capacity that facilities like hospitals, morgues, and funeral homes have are finite. This limited space has the potential to be exhausted when funerals are not being held in a timely fashion, which could be attributable to a variety of factors, including, but not limited to:

- loved ones delaying the process of saying goodbye until the pandemic and its effects (travel and gathering limitations) end
- funeral homes not being able to conduct the business in the manner they usually do
- families potentially being sick or quarantined themselves

Since COVID-19 reached our community, we have lost 58 of our neighbors to the pandemic. As the virus continues its course in the St. Louis region, there may be other lives lost. We are working every day with our hospital partners to prevent loss of life, while simultaneously collaborating with hospitals, funeral directors, and other stakeholder groups to preserve dignity and respect for any who may pass as a result of COVID-19.

Children and COVID-19

Children look to the adults in their lives to know how to react to the world around them. Adults can serve as role models by being aware of how you talk about COVID-19 and paying special attention to focus on the positive. When discussing COVID-19 with children it is helpful to acknowledge your concerns as well. Be truthful when they ask questions without flooding them with more information than they need. Give children a plan of action to help ease their fears. Daily walks, phone calls with loved ones and writing thank you letters to healthcare workers give children a sense of control over the situation. When kids feel empowered to control their own life, it can reduce stress and having a calming impact.

More information related to talking with your children about COVID-19 can be found at the National Association of School Psychologists. <https://www.nasponline.org>.

Contact Information

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services hotline can be reached at (877)435-8411.

St. Louis County has created a website dedicated to the dissemination of information relating to COVID-19, www.stlcorona.com. Please visit that website or those belonging to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO) for the most current and reputable information.



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